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17

BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE: MUṢAṢIR, KUMME, UKKU AND ŠUBRIA – THE BUFFER STATES BETWEEN ASSYRIA AND URARṬU

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The relationship between Assyria and Biainili was an uneasy one ever since the initial contacts in the 9th century BC, and the two states frequently clashed over conflicts of interest. While this resulted in the two rivals' successive annexation of territories in south-eastern Turkey and north-western Iran, the mountainous regions between the headwaters of the Tigris and of the Lower Zab remained independent and a group of small kingdoms was allowed to survive: Countries like Šubria, Kumme, Ukku and Musasir separated Assyria from Urartu and formed a string of 'buffer states' between the two powers (Fig. 17.01). These kingdoms are certainly not the only independent regions inside the Assyro-Urartian corridor: Hubuškia (whose location is still fiercely contested)[1] and the various Habhu countries[2] may be mentioned but I shy away from treating them here precisely because of the problems to put them on the map and will instead focus on four of the better documented states. In order to appreciate more fully the respective roles of Šubria, Kumme, Ukku and Musasir, I will not limit myself to the situation during the 9th to 7th century but will try to trace the history of these territories leading up to the period when we see them caught up in the Assyro-Urartian conflict.

Although certainly not among the most prominent of Near Eastern states, Šubria, Kumme, Ukku and Musasir have found their share of attention in the recent past. Musasir is of course discussed in any context that concerns Urartian royal ideology and / or the 'homeland' of the royal dynasty of Išpuini. The relationship of Assyria with some of these states, specifically Šubria, Kumme and Ukku, has more than once been studied within the theoretical framework of frontier studies by Bradley J. Parker[3], the regional focus due to his work being based on the analysis of the results of Guillermo Algaze's surveys in the Turkish Tigris region between 1988 and 1992. Walter Mayer's study of Kumme[4], on the other hand, was written in the context of an interdisciplinary research project on transregional sanctuaries yet he focuses ultimately (like Parker whose work he does not seem to be aware of) on the impact of the close relationship with Assyria.

In this paper, I will attempt to study these small kingdoms 'from within', consciously avoiding the Assyrian or Urartian perspective. This is from the start a somewhat flawed endeavour; the most serious obstacle is the lack of autochthonous sources which can only to a degree be overcome by using the materials left by the scribes of their two powerful neighbours: The official accounts preserved in the Assyrian and Urartian royal inscriptions are supplemented by the wealth of information found in the correspondence of Sargon of Assyria (721-705 BC) with his top officials and other materials from the Assyrian state archives of Kalhu and Nineveh.

[1] See Zimansky 1990: 19, Lanfranchi 1995: 127 and Salvini 1995b: 43 for a brief overview of the debate. Lanfranchi 1995 proposed – convincingly, in my mind – to place Hubuškia in 'the upper valley of the Lower Zab, that long and narrow strip of land which extends north-south from its springs, around Khaneh, to Sardasht' (p. 136) yet Salvini 1997 remained undecided while the latest treatment by Medvedskaya 1997 again championed Hubuškia's location in the area of Hakkari, despite the resulting serious difficulties for reconstructing Urartian history highlighted by Reade (1994: 185-187). The discovery of 13 stone steles at Hakkari in 1998 has stimulated an interest in the historical geography of the area, but it is not helpful to automatically assume a connection with Hubuškia, as Sevin & Özfirat (2001c: 19-20) seem to do.

[2] Fuchs 2000 distilled five Habhu countries out of the multitude of attestations; I am still tempted to see the term simply as a generic word for mountain region (cf. Radner & Schachner 2001: 761-762).

[3] Parker 2001, 2002.

[4] Mayer 2002. Note that the section dealing with the second millennium situation suffers from the fact that Kumme is merged with Qumānu which cannot be maintained for geographical reasons.

Fig. 17.01. Map showing the location of the buffer states between Assyria and Urartu (drawing by C. Wolff and labelling by C. Gruber after a sketch by K. Radner).

None of the political and religious centres which we shall encounter in our survey has been excavated (with the possible exception of Ukku), but the conspicuous lack of written materials – monumental and archival – may be more than just the result of archaeological fortunes: Šubria, Kumme and Musasir can certainly be described as (linguistically and culturally) Hurrian states, and, as in Mittani before them, royal display of power may have taken other forms than the monumental inscriptions known from Assyrians, Urartians or Hittites. The bureaucrats, whom we expect to find in the shadow of a major temple such as the temples of the storm god of Kumme and of Haldi of Musasir, may have used other ways to keep their books than writing on clay tablets.

It is, however, impossible to imagine a scenario in which these states functioned entirely without writing: For the reign of Sargon II, the preserved letters show that Assyrian cuneiform scribes were put at the local rulers' disposal (or rather were forced onto them) and facilitated the required correspondence with Assyria. On the other hand, information found in these letters also attests to the fact that the Urartian king likewise expected to receive messages from these rulers[5]; yet in what shape is unclear: a letter from the king of Šubria to an Assyrian magnate evidently composed in Hurrian, as is clear from the Hurrian extract quoted (with a translation) in the summary report to Sargon (SAA 5 35), should alert us to the fact that the Assyrian language was not the only language used for the exchange of messages, even when communicating with Assyrian officials.

[5] SAA 5 95 (= Lanfranchi & Parpola 1990: no. 95).

But although we should bear in mind that such correspondence could spawn unlikely results – the characteristic genre of Urartian inscriptions, for example, must be considered a development from the conventions of Assyrian letter writing[6] – we should not necessarily expect local adaptations of the 'tyrant's writ'[7]: civilised life is entirely possible without the tyranny of writing and the freedom not to write may have been a highly valued cultural choice that set the rulers and inhabitants of the mountain kingdoms apart from their Assyrian and Urartian neighbours.

The territories under investigation are not remote backwaters, forgotten by civilization. Situated as they are in Breasted and Braidwood's 'hilly flanks of the Fertile Crescent'[8], they boast continuous human occupation for far longer than the Mesopotamian plain, and an awareness of the antiquity of their traditions may be reflected by the great respect in which their deities and their sanctuaries were held in the entire Near East; I will argue in this paper that it was this respect that protected Musasir, Kumme and Šubria from their aggressive first millennium neighbours in Assyria and Urartu. We will begin our survey with the perhaps most famous independent state in the Assyro-Urartian corridor, the country which the Assyrians called Musasir.

1. Muṣaṣir (Assyrian) / Ardini (Urartian) – The Holy City of Haldi

The Urartian sources of the first millennium BC use the traditional name Ardini[9], derived from Hurrian **arte-ni* 'The City'[10], a designation already in evidence before 2000 BC during the reign of Šulgi of Ur.[11] But the very same ancient settlement, as the Urartian bilingual inscriptions show[12], was known to the Assyrians from at least the 9th century BC onwards as 'Muṣaṣir': the earliest reference is found in the so-called Banquet Stele of Assurnasirpal II (883-859 BC) where delegates from Musasir are listed among the foreign dignitaries attending the inauguration festivities at the new royal residence city Kalhu.[13] Perhaps the city was known under yet another name in Mannea and / or in the Aramaic language, for in the stele from Qalaychi ('Bukān stele') south of Lake Urmia, Musasir's deity Haldi is invokes as *hldy zy bs/z'tr* 'Haldi of BS/Z'TR'.[14]

The Assyrian name 'Muṣaṣir' must be derived from the region's designation as 'Muṣru' in the late second millennium which we encounter most clearly in the inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser I (1114-1076 BC)[15]:

> The god Aššur, my lord, commanded me to conquer KUR.*Mu-uṣ-ri* and I took the way between Mounts KUR.*E-la-mu-ni*, KUR.*Ta-la* and KUR.*Ha-ru-sa*. I conquered KUR.*Mu-uṣ-ri* in its entirety and slew their warriors. I burned, razed and destroyed their settlements. The troops of KUR.*Qu-ma-né-e* came to the aid of KUR.*Mu-uṣ-ri*. I fought with them in the mountains (and) I brought about their defeat. I confined them to just one city, URU.*A-ri-ni* which is at the foot of Mount KUR.*A-i-sa*. They submitted to me (and) I spared that city. I imposed upon them hostages, tax duties and tribute.

The neighbouring kingdom of Qumāne, which must be distinguished[16] from the similar sounding city of Kumme (Urartian Qumenu[17]), can be located with confidence in the plain of Alqoš,[18] and the city of URU.*A-ri-ni ša* GÌR KUR.*A-i-sa* can certainly be identified with the Urartian Ardini and the Neo-Assyrian Musasir,

[6] Kessler 1986: 66; Wilhelm 1986: 106.

[7] To borrow the title of Steiner 1994, a stimulating analysis of the two opposing views of writing in evidence in the Greek sources of the fifth and fourth centuries BC: as the guarantor of the citizens' rights on the one hand, as the instrument of coercive regulation on the other.

[8] See Braidwood 1972: 312 for a history of the now universally used term.

[9] Diakonoff & Kashkai 1981: 9 s.v. Ardine.

[10] Salvini 1993-1997: 445.

[11] *A-ri-nu-um*.KI in Bryn Mawr College no. 2 l. 17, a list of small cattle from various settlements in the Transtigridan area dated to Šulgi's 49th regnal year, published by Ellis 1979: 35-36; cf. Astour 1987: 22 who, however, does not connect the city with the later Musasir. See below for discussion of an inscription of Tiglath-pileser I that demonstrates that Arinum/Arini corresponds to Ardini/*Arteni.

[12] Diakonoff & Kashkai 1981: 58 s.v. Muṣaṣir.

[13] Grayson 1991: 293 A.0.101.30 l. 147: KUR.Mu-ṣa-ṣi-ra-a-a.

[14] The reading follows Fales 2003: 136-138 but note that he suggests to interpret *bs/z'tr* as a personal name.

[15] Grayson 1991: 23 A.0.87.1 v 67-81.

[16] With Postgate 1995: 7 and against e.g. Mayer 2002: 329.

[17] Diakonoff & Kashkai 1981: 70 s.v. Qumenu.

[18] Postgate 1995: 6-7.

which is known from the later sources to be situated in the vicinity of Mount Uajais[19] and to border onto the synonymous Urartian province and its principal city.[20] Moreover, Mount KUR.*Ha-ru-sa* can certainly be equated with KUR.*Ar-si-ú*, the 'mighty mountain' which Sargon II's crack army crosses to get to Musasir in 714.[21] And finally, Mount KUR.*E-la-mu-ni* can be connected with the fact that, according to Sargon's information, the Greater Zab[22] was known as ÍD.*E-la-mu-ni-a* in this area[23]. The combination of the regional name Muṣru, the city name Arinu (< **arte-ni*, with Assyrianized ending) and the mountain names (U)aisa = Uajais, Harusa = Arsiu and Elamuni makes it certain that we can take this passage to be a reliable reference to the later city of Musasir.

Therefore, the earlier report on a campaign of Shalmaneser I of Assyria (13th century BC) against Muṣru and the holy city of Arinu also referred to the future kingdom of Musasir[24] and the holy city of Ardini (and not to the Hittite city of Arinna[25]):

> The city of URU.*A-ri-na*, the holy city founded in bedrock, which had previously rebelled (and) disregarded the god Aššur – with the support of Aššur and the great gods, my lords, I captured (and) destroyed that city and sowed salt over it. I gathered its earth and piled it up at the gate of my city Assur for posterity. At that time, I had all of KUR.*Mu-uṣ-ri* submit to my lord Aššur.

Already in this early account, 'Muṣru' is clearly differentiated from 'Uruaṭri', subject of a separate campaign report.[26] The description as 'holy city founded in bedrock' again stresses the mountainous location but also hints at the existence of an unidentified sanctuary within the city limits. This is certainly the temple of Haldi, and while neither he nor his temple are explicitly mentioned in the Middle Assyrian sources, the theonym is well attested as a formative element in Assyrian personal names such as Kidin-Haldi and Ṣilli-Haldi[27] – evidence for the widespread influence of the master of the holy city. We must take notice of Shalmaneser's claim to have razed the rebellious city – which had been subdued a century earlier by Aššur-uballit I (14th century) if we can trust an inscription of Shalmaneser's predecessor Adad-nerari I[28] – with the specific mention of its debris being transported back to Assur for a ritual of victory and commemoration; yet we know that Arinu survived the destruction, as it is mentioned in an inscription of Shalmaneser's successor Tukulti-Ninurta I[29] and a century and a half later by Tiglath-pileser I.

Let us have another look at the toponyms that we have encountered so far in connection with Haldi's city. On the one hand, we can trace the Hurrian **arte-ni* 'The city' in the shape of Middle Assyrian Arrinu[30] and Urartian Ardini while on the other hand, Middle Assyrian 'Muṣru' is transformed into Neo-Assyrian 'Muṣaṣir'. It is probable that 'Muṣru' originally meant nothing more than 'borderland'[31] which, from an Assyrian perspective, suits its fringe location at the edge of the Zagros mountain range rather well. How this morphed into 'Muṣaṣir' cannot be reconstructed, yet an explanation of sorts for this name is given in one of the two inscriptions engraved on the Assyrian cylinder seal (Fig. 17.02)[32] which belonged to Urzana, Musasir's ruler during

[19] The name is preserved in Assyrian texts in a variety of different spellings, in the inscriptions of Sargon II as KUR.*Ú-a-(ú)-uš* and in Sargon's letters as URU / KUR.*U* / *Ú-a-(a)-si* and URU.*Ú-e-si* (for references see Lanfranchi & Parpola 1990: 248); for the Urartian references see Diakonoff & Kashkai 1981: 103 s.v. Wūše.

[20] Zimansky 1985: 128 n. 148; Zimansky 1990: 16-17 with n. 60.

[21] Sg 8: 322 (see n. 37).

[22] Although the passage in all probability refers to the Rowanduz Çay, a tributary of the Greater Zab, as suggested by Russell 1984: 198; cf. Zimansky 1990: 20.

[23] Sg 8: 323 (see n. 37). The identical names were also noted by Astour 1987: 21 and Mayer 2002: 344.

[24] Grayson 1987: 183 A.0.77.1 ll. 47-55.

[25] This popular but incorrect assumption is often made, most recently by Deszö 2006: 38 n. 28.

[26] Grayson 1987: 183 A.0.77.1 ll. 22-46.

[27] For references see Saporetti 1970 and Freydank & Saporetti 1979.

[28] Grayson 1987: 132 A.0.76.1 l. 31 *mu-šek-niš* KUR.*Mu-uṣ-ri* 'subduer of Muṣru' as an epithet of Shalmaneser.

[29] Grayson 1987: 273 A.0.78.23 l. 78 URU.*A-ri-in-ni*.

[30] See also Nashef 1982: 37 s.v. Arinnu.

[31] *AHw* 659 s.v. *miṣru(m)*; *CAD* M/II 113-115 s.v. *miṣru* A.

[32] Thureau-Dangin 1912: XII; Collon 1994. The seal is unfortunately of unknown provenance: it was acquired by the Austrian ambassador Graf von Schwachheim at the end of the 18th century AD in Istanbul and is now part of the collection of the Koninklijk Penningkabinet at The Hague.

the reign of Sargon II (721-705 BC): this beautiful example of Assyrian craftsmanship is decorated with the image of a four-winged, bare-headed genius throttling two ostrich birds and may have been an official Assyrian gift to Urzana when relations between Assyria and Musasir were still blossoming. While the first and original inscription only identifies the purpose of the seal as a talisman,[33] the secondary inscription, which was engraved in six lines above and below the first one, seems to provide us with an etymology for the name Musasir:

> Seal of Urzana, the king of Musasir, the city of the raven, of which, like a snake in difficult mountains, the mouth is open.[34]

Fig. 17.02. Seal of Urzana (after Wartke 1993a: Abb. 16).

Leaving the reference to Musasir as a 'raven city' aside for the moment, we can certainly agree with C.B.F. Walker that the second part of the inscription is a pun on the Assyrian name of the city, consisting of *mūṣu* 'exit' and *ṣīru* 'snake'[35] and would therefore appear somewhat less obscure in an Assyrian-speaking environment than our translation might initially suggest.

Therefore, we should perhaps not expect to find clues in the physical landscape that may be connected with a snake's mouth, yet on the other hand there can be little doubt that the city was indeed situated in 'difficult mountains' – but where exactly? It seems evident from the itinerary of Sargon's 714 campaign,[36] given in his Letter to Aššur,[37] that Musasir should be situated somewhere in the impressive mountain range which needed to be crossed in order to reach Lake Urmia when coming from central Assyria. The assumption of a

[33] NA_4.^{d}LAMMA = *aban lamassi*, literally 'stone of the protective deity.' The seal is fashioned out of pink chalcedony and NA_4.^{d}LAMMA might also refer to the material, but this is less likely; see Collon 1994: 37.

[34] NA_4.KIŠIB ^{PN}*Ur-za-na* ^{2} LUGAL KUR.*Mu-ṣa-ṣir* ^{3} URU.Ú.NAGA^1.MUŠEN^1 ^{4} *ša* GIM MUŠ ^{5} *ina* KUR-*e* HUL.MEŠ ^{6} KA-*šú pe-tu-u*. The reading is unproblematic with the exception of the last two signs in l. 3. I follow the small emendation of Thureau-Dangin 1912: XII rather than the proposal of Irving Finkel *apud* Collon 1994: 37-38 to read this line as URU.*Ú-ra*^{1}-*as-ti* and interpret this as 'an Urartian city', this spelling for Urartu is not attested in the contemporary Assyrian texts but perhaps more importantly, Musasir was not an Urartian city.

[35] C.B.F. Walker *apud* Collon 1987: 87.

[36] For the many attempts to reconstruct the route of this campaign see Zimansky 1990 (with a map sketching the previous reconstructions of the route on p. 6 fig. 1) and Zimansky 1995b and cf. Salvini 1995b: 46.

[37] Text publication by Thureau-Dangin 1912 with an additional fragment published in KAH 2 141; last full edition by Mayer 1983. The text is here quoted as Sg 8.

location to the west of Lake Urmia is further strengthened by the find spots in the Iraqi province of Erbil of two steles erected by Urartian kings, one by Išpuini and Minua and the other by Rusa son of Sarduri (Fig. 17.01). The monuments' bilingual inscriptions – in Urartian and Assyrian and therefore quite clearly addressed not only to their own people but also to the Assyrians (or perhaps those factions in Musasir who could read Assyrian) – recount journeys of Išpuini, Minua and Rusa to Musasir and seem to mark the route used:[38] It is plausible to assume that the city should be located in their vicinity. Išpuini and Minua's stele[39], now in the Museum in Urumiyeh (Iran), once stood at the pass of Kelishin (36° 54' N, 44° 55' E) at the modern-day border between Iraq and Iran, while the monument of Sargon's contemporary, Rusa son of Sarduri,[40] now in the Museum of Erbil (Iraq), was erected at Topzawa (36° 48' N, 44° 41' E) just to the north-east of the modern town of Sidikan, some 25 km south-west of the Kelishin pass and reached from there by descending alongside the course of the Topzawa Çay.[41] Two duplicates of or, perhaps better, close parallels[42] to Rusa's bilingual stele were found in the Iranian province of Western Azerbaijan: a very fragmentary piece in 1976 at Mergeh Karvan[43] just at the eastern side of the Kelishin pass, and the by far most complete (although poorly preserved) copy in 1995 much further to the north at Movana[44] (37° 36' N, 44° 49' E), apparently alongside the route leading from Kelishin back to Urartu's capital Tušpa (Turušpa in Assyrian) (modern Van Kalesi).

Another important clue to the location of Musasir is offered in a letter from Sargon's correspondence[45] recording the daily stages of the itinerary from Musasir to Arbail[46]: URU.*A-la-mu*, URU.*Hi-ip-tú-ni*, URU.*Mu-ši*, [U]RU.1-*te* and finally Arbail, the stations scheduled for Urzana king of Musasir on his way to meet with the Assyrian king. Of these places, only Hiptunu can be located: its identification with Tall Haftūn (36° 39' N, 44° 15' E)[47] in the Herir plain is virtually certain. Hiptunu was separated from Musasir by the Andaruttu mountains, considered divine as their mention as the god Adaruta in the Urartian Meher Kapısı inscription (see below) indicates.[48] Mount Andaruttu can easily be equated with the Baradost mountain range and the pass explicitly mentioned in Sargon's Letter to Aššur[49] should be identified with the pass between the Seko massif and the Baradost massif which connects the valley of Mergazur with that of the Greater Zab: in the mid 20th century AD, this route was routinely used by the Shirwani tribal Kurds to move, together with their livestock, between their winter accommodation in the Shanidar cave[50] and other nearby caves and their summer-time

[38] See Russell 1984: 175-176 and André-Salvini & Salvini 2002: 29-30.

[39] Edition Benedict 1961 (= CTU A 3-11); with Salvini 1984: 63-64 and Mayer 1988.

[40] Edition Salvini 1984: 79-95 (including the duplicate from Mergeh Karvan) (= CTU A 10-5); a German translation is also given in Salvini 1984: 83. Note the warning of Salvini (2001d: 256-257) against the edition by N.V. Arutjunjan 2001: no. 387. According to Lanfranchi & Parpola 1990: XVII-XVIII, Rusa's steles can be dated with the help of letters from the Sargon correspondence to the events after 714 BC, but André-Salvini & Salvini 2002: 28-29 advocate a different reconstruction of events and assume that the steles were set up before Sargon's conquest of Musasir in 714.

[41] For a map of the area see Boehmer 1993-1997: 447 Abb. 1.

[42] The term 'duplicate' should be used with considerable caution: although the Assyrian text inscribed on all three steles seems to be identical apart from the mention of different toponyms in passages which may refer to the erection of the monuments, the divergences in the Urartian versions are considerable; yet the fragmentary nature of all three steles makes a detailed comparison difficult (see André-Salvini & Salvini 2002: 26-28).

[43] CTU A 10-4. For the location and the circumstances of the find see Salvini 1984: 54 (map), 80-81 with n. 9; also André-Salvini & Salvini 2002: 32 (map).

[44] Edition André-Salvini & Salvini 2002 (= CTU A 10-4).

[45] SAA 5 136. The significance of the letter was recognized by Deller 1984: 121.

[46] The photographs chosen by Braidwood & Howe 1960: pl. 1-3 to illustrate the gradual change in the landscape between the piedmont country of Erbil and the highland country near Rowanduz give a good idea of the different terrain covered by this itinerary.

[47] A suggestion by Zadok 1978: 181 that has found general acceptance, see e.g. Deller 1984: 121, Lanfranchi 1995: 130, Postgate 1995: 8.

[48] Salvini 1994: 207.

[49] Sg 8: 425: *i-na né-re-bi ša* KUR.*An-da-ru-ut-ta* KUR-*i mar-ṣi* SAG URU.*Hi-ip-tú-na at-tu-ṣi-a šal-míš a-n* KUR-*ia a-tu-ra* 'I emerged from the pass of Andaruttu, a difficult mountain, above Hiptunu and returned safely to my country.'

[50] The Shanidar Cave is most famous for its Neanderthal skeletons (Trinkaus 1983) and the Proto-Neolithic cemetery, now dated to the 9th millennium BC (Solecki et al. 2004) but note that an early survey yielded some Neo-Assyrian pottery sherds (Mahmud al-Amin *apud* Solecki 1971: 47).

habitation in the Mergazur valley which, being shielded from the sun, is a much cooler environment than the other side of the mountain range (Fig. 17.03);[51] the same pass was also used by the Herki tribal Kurds and their livestock on their way to Iran, via Mergazur and Kelishin,[52] crossing the Greater Zab with the help of a wooden bridge that they assembled at Pira Sar gorge at Shanidar for the occasion[53]. The Baradost pass through the mountains is well suited to move the rich spoils taken by Sargon from Musasir to Assyria, including '6110 people [plus Urzana's family], twelve mules, 380 donkeys, 525 cattle and 1235 sheep'.[54] It was into the same Andaruttu mountains that Rusa pursued Urzana when he was trying to flee from Musasir to Assyria.[55]

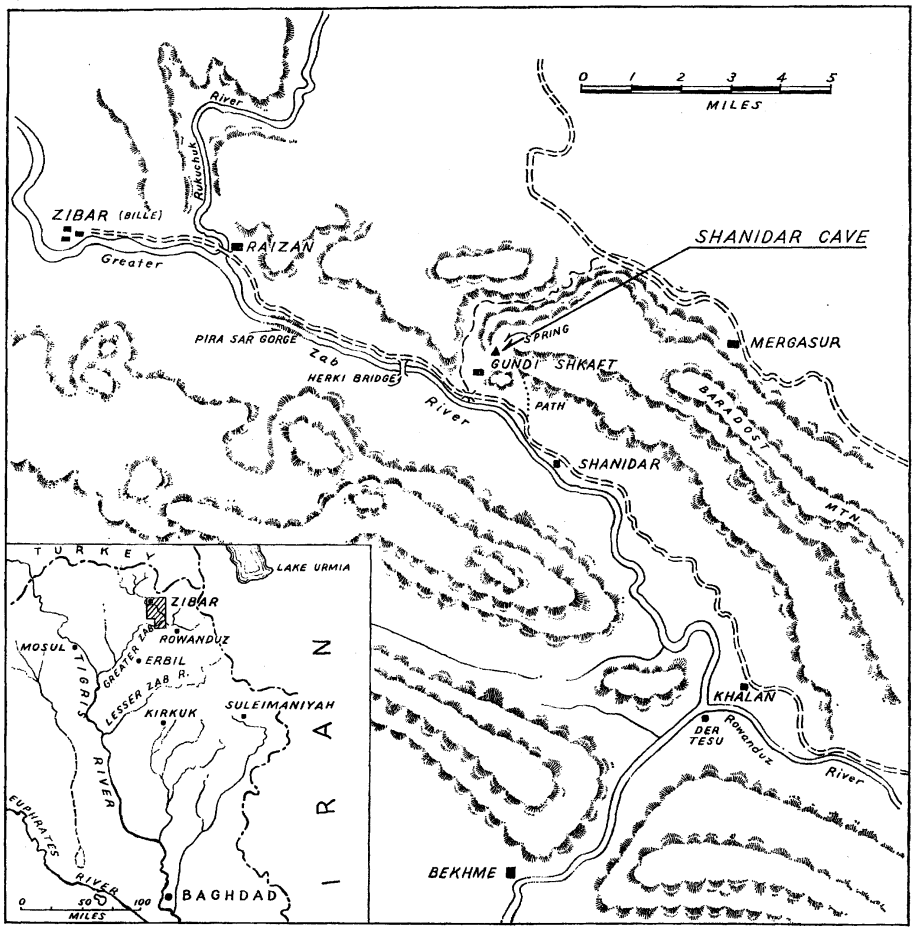

Fig. 17.03. The passage through the Baradost mountain range (reproduced from Solecki 1979: 319).

[51] Solecki 1979: 319-321. The map of the area given on p. 319 (and reproduced here) corresponds to the one in Solecki et al. 2004: 121 fig. 1.

[52] Solecki 1971: 108.

[53] Solecki 1971: 103-104, 108-111, with interesting observations about the construction of the bridge in 1952 and about the tolls charged to each family for the passage of their livestock (but not the people): two Iraqi fils for each sheep or goat and twenty fils for each horse or donkey.

[54] Sg 8: 349.

[55] Salvini 1984; André-Salvini & Salvini 2002 (= CTU A 10-3 obv. 46', A 10-4 obv. 19', A 10-5 obv. 16').

The area is also accessible via Rowanduz – the controlling point on the route leading from Erbil to Lake Urmia via the Gawre Shinke Pass (also Garaushinke Pass; see Fig. 17.04) – but this requires the repeated crossing of the Rowanduz river, which a trek with livestock would better aim to avoid.[56]

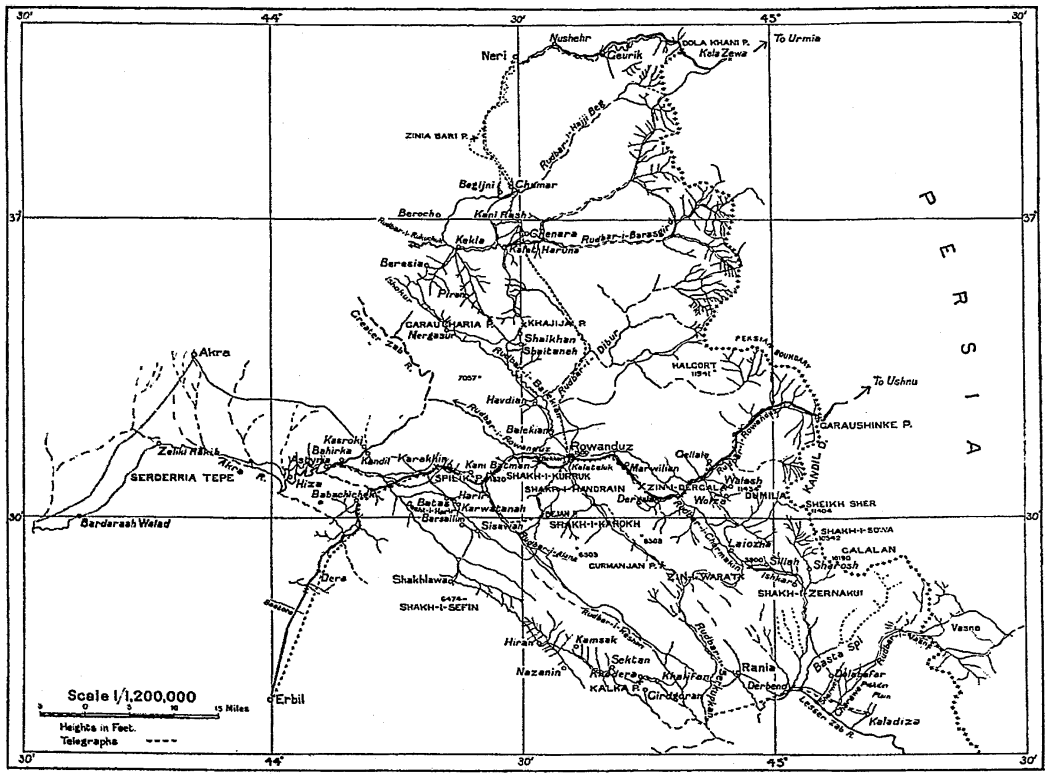

Fig. 17.04. The route from Erbil to Iran prior to the construction of Hamilton's Rowanduz Road (reproduced from Mason 1919: 337).

To sum up, Musasir is separated from Assyria by Mount Andaruttu (the Baradost mountain range) and from Urartu by Mount Uajais (the Zagros main ridge with peaks like Mount Halgurt reaching over 3600 m). The Assyrian and Urartian texts would therefore indicate Musasir's general location in the area of Sidikan (Fig. 17.05); Rainer M. Boehmer,[57] prompted by the apparent similarity of the two toponyms, suggested that Musasir should be identified with the fortified Iron Age site of Mudjesir, some 7 km west of Topzawa, but while this remains possible it must be pointed out that the identification has never been proven conclusively.[58] Yet although the city itself may not be located precisely at present, few would argue with the assumption that

[56] The British officer Major Kenneth Mason (1919: 334-335; the useful area map on p. 337 is reproduced here), dispatched from Mosul to Rowanduz in January 1919, gives a good account on the difficulty of travelling along that route, especially in regard to the crossing of the Rowanduz river. The perils of this route are also clear from the account of the engineer A.M. Hamilton (1937) who was responsible for the construction of the road from Erbil to Rowanduz between 1928 and 1932.

[57] Boehmer 1973; Boehmer & Fenner 1973b; Boehmer 1993-1997: 446-448.

[58] For a critique see Zimansky 1990: 3 n. 11 who remains unconvinced of the identification; others, e.g. Russell 1984: 177 and Postgate 1995: 9, are more positive.

the kingdom of Musasir – for which the fortified city of URU.*Zap-pa-ri-a* and 46 other settlements are reported in the inscriptions of Shalmaneser III (858-824 BC)[59] – covered the hilly high plain dominated today by Sidikan (also Sidekan; 36° 47' N, 44° 40' E).[60]

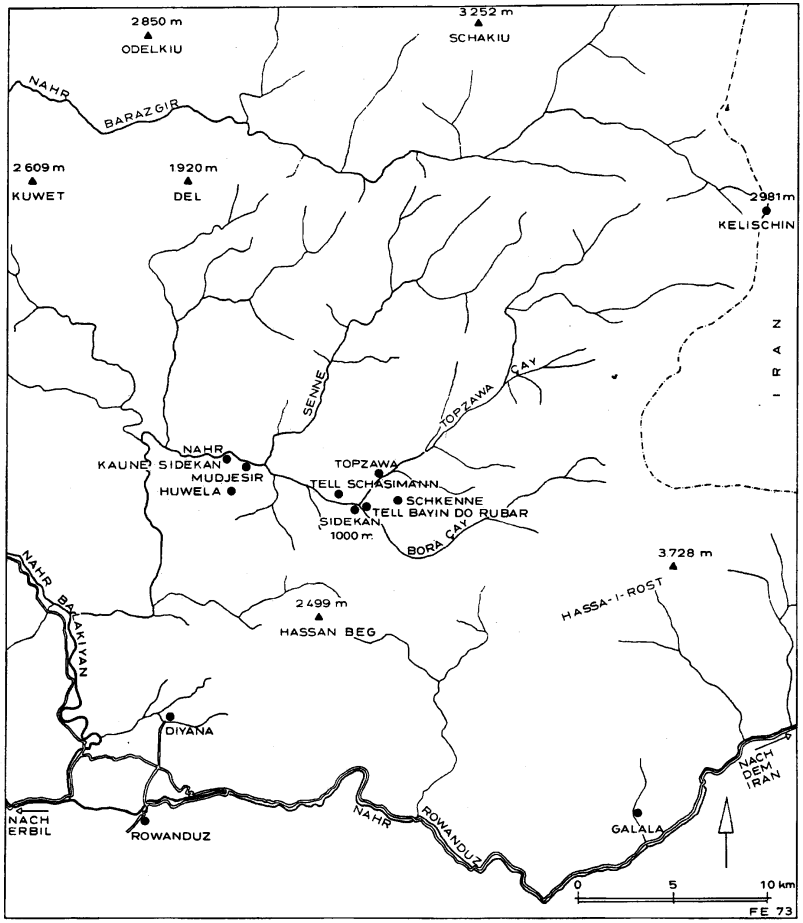

Fig. 17.05. Sketch map of the region round Sidekan (after Boehmer 1993-1997: 447).

According to Shalmaneser I, the city was founded on bedrock, and Sargon II refers to its king Urzana as a 'mountain dweller'[61]. But while Musasir was protected by its mountainous location, once reached by an enemy army it could offer little resistance: among others, Shalmaneser I and Sargon II of Assyria and Rusa of Urartu entered the city by force. Already an 18th century attestation for the city in a letter excavated in Šušarra

[59] Grayson 1996: 70 A.0.102.14 ll. 178-179; 83 A.0.102.16 ll. 325'-326'. The description of life in the village of Rūst with a population of 700, recorded in the mid 20th century AD before it was connected to the Rowanduz road (Galloway 1958), gives an idea of the climatic conditions and the economic conditions in the Sidikan area.

[60] Zimansky 1990: 3 with n. 11, 20.

[61] Sg 8: 310: LÚ.*šad-da-a-'u-ú*.

(modern Tell Shemshara), dating to the reign of Samsi-Addu of Ekallātum, reported an alliance of Lullubian kings marching against URU.*Ar-ru-ni-im*.KI in order to besiege the city:[62] this reference to a rich settlement in the foothills of the Zagros mountain range fits the profile of the later Musasir well.

What, then, about suggestions to look for Musasir outside of the Sidikan area, perhaps closer to Lake Urmia? Only recently, the results of the excavations which have been conducted since 2005 under the direction of Bahman Kargar and Reza Heidari at Rabat Tepe, a settlement site some 15 km north-east of the town of Sardasht (36° 09' N, 45° 29' E) in the Iranian province of Western Azerbaijan, have given rise to the hypothesis – voiced by Reza Heidari in various press releases – that the Iron Age remains encountered at this site may be the ruins of Musasir; it is to be hoped that the finds, which include wall paintings and glazed bricks, will soon be published[63], especially the cuneiform inscriptions inscribed on various bricks. Until then, Heidari's hypothesis must be treated with great caution; I personally am not inclined to consider Rabat Tepe a likely candidate for identification with Musasir.

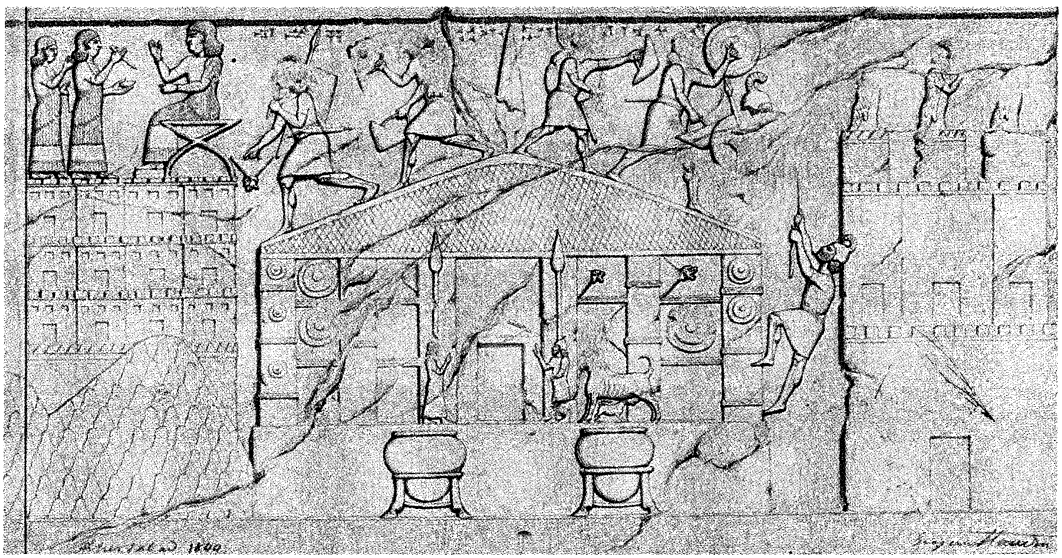

Fig. 17.06. The temple at Musasir: Eugène Flandin's drawing of Slab 4 in Room XIII of Sargon's palace at Dur-Šarrukin (reproduced from Botta 1849: pl. 141).

Sargon famously plundered the sanctuary of Haldi and his consort Bagbartu in 714, an act celebrated both in his official statements[64] and in the architectural decoration of the most prominent Assyrian buildings: the facade of the Aššur temple was covered with glazed bricks that illustrated Sargon's Eighth Campaign[65] and the same subject was chosen for the stone reliefs displayed on the walls of his palace at Khorsabad (Fig. 17.06)[66]

[62] Eidem & Læssøe 2001: 134-136 no. 63 ll. 20-21: *a-na* URU.*Ar-ru-ni-im*.KI *la-wi-im* [21] *it-ta-al-ku* 'They have marched off to besiege Arrunum.' Or should we emend the place name to URU.*Ar-di*$^{!}$*-ni-im*.KI?

[63] See for now Hassanzadeh 2006 (with map) who places the finds within the Mannean cultural horizon and Kargar & Binandeh 2009, who also see Rabat as Mannaean and do not accept the identification with Musasir.

[64] Most prominently in the already mentioned Letter to Aššur: Sg 8: 309-414; note also the Eponym Chronicle's entry for 714 BC: [*a-na* KUR.*Ur-a*]*r-ṭi* URU.*Mu-ṣa-ṣir Hal-di-a* 'Against Urartu, Musasir and Haldi' (Millard 1994: 47, 60).

[65] Weidner 1926; cf. Mayer 1980: 21-22.

[66] The original (Room XIII, Slab 4) is mostly lost and we must rely on Eugène Flandin's drawing (Botta 1849: pl. 141; Albenda 1986: pl. 133) which is frequently reproduced, e.g. in this article as well as in Boehmer 1993-97: 449 Abb. 5, Salvini 1995: 95 Abb. 2, Lanfranchi & Parpola 1990: II.

– the illustration of Haldi's shrine, with its unique roof construction and its facade decorated with shields, spears and statues, is perhaps the most celebrated architectural representation in Assyrian art; only the recovery of the ruins of the building itself will be able to clarify how the Assyrian depiction is to be interpreted but while the reconstruction as a prototype of a Classical Greek temple is extremely unlikely we may perhaps imagine the building with a square ground plan and a pilaster facade, over which a tent roof was erected.[67]

Any archaeologist working in the northern Zagros area would of course wish to discover Musasir, the home of the legendary temple of the god Haldi, recipient of dedicatory gifts from Urartu, Assyria, Habhu and even far-away Tabal.[68] Since the reign of Išpuini, Haldi headed the Urartian state pantheon despite the fact that Musasir did not constitute part of the kingdom of Urartu but remained a separate state; from that time onwards, a series of Haldi temples was built in Urartu, and in a store room of one of them, the shrine at the Upper Anzaf fortress, a shield was excavated in 1995 that shows the deity leading the other Urartian gods into battle, in the same sequence as in Išpuini and Minua's inscription of Meher Kapısı.[69] The shield, dedicated by Išpuini and Minua, shows Haldi as a warrior with a bow and a javelin (or perhaps a gigantic arrow?) and surrounded by an aura of flames which calls to mind the blazing sun.[70] This first known depiction of the god would seem to strengthen the view that there is a conceptual link between Haldi and Mithra, a connection assumed by the traditional Armenian designation for the blind rock portal at Van, which the Urartians called 'Door of Haldi'[71], as Mheri duŕ 'Door of Mher (Mithra), of which the more common name Meher Kapısı is but a translation into Turkish. This association may already have been established in the Achaemenid period when Urartian traditions played an important role in the shaping of royal ideology; Mithra appears from the reign of Artaxerxes II (404-359 BC) onwards in royal inscriptions[72] and perhaps before that in the Persepolis Fortification Tablets.[73] Armen Petrosyan[74] has recently analysed the striking similarities between the two deities and argued, convincingly in my view, that they are part of the same stream of tradition. Indeed, Haldi's depiction as a soldier and solar deity corresponds closely to Mithras' representation as known especially from Roman sources, the cult of the Invincible Sun (Sol invictus) spreading across the empire from the first century AD with the Roman army whose members encountered the mystery cult in the east. If we bear in mind that Musasir housed the original Haldi temple, then two facts become highly significant, that the cult of Mithras is closely connected to underground caves and that the raven is a key symbol of the god: first, a number of caves[75] in the Baradost mountains, holy Mount Andaruttu – among them the Shanidar cave, with its millennia long history of human (and Neanderthal) occupation and ritual use – is situated in Musasir's territory and secondly, Musasir is called the 'city of the raven' in the already mentioned inscription of Urzana's seal.

To return to the special connection between Haldi, the city of Musasir and the Urartian royal dynasty,[76] the crown prince of Urartu was appointed or at least confirmed as the future king under Haldi's auspices in Musasir, and they and their top officials routinely visited the Haldi temple, apparently following a certain schedule. If we bear in mind that it was known to the Urartians as 'The City', we may be tempted to describe Musasir as the Holy City of the Urartians, and especially their kings. Is a comparison with Rome's role for the emperors of the Holy Roman Empire too far-fetched? Musasir's special role for Urartian kingship was obvious

[67] Boehmer 1993-1997: 448-449.

[68] The contents of the temple according to Sargon's list of booty are discussed by Mayer 1979.

[69] König 1955-1957: 51-56 HchI 10 (= CTU A 3-1); see Belli 1999a.

[70] Belli 1999a: 37-41; for an improved drawing of the scene, with corrections to the depiction of Haldi, see Seidl 2004: 85 Abb. 48. See also Roaf this volume Chapter 24: Figs. 24.16, 19-21. Zimansky (this volume 07: n.10) suggests that because he does not wear a divine horned headdress instead of Haldi this figure represents the king endowed with the powers of Haldi.

[71] Salvini 1994: 205.

[72] Petrosyan 2006: 230-231.

[73] Possibly as the divine name *mišebaka* (Hallock 1969: 19 and 732, but this is contested by Henkelmann 2008: 554) and more probably as a theophoric element (written *mišša* or *mitra*) in personal names (Hallock 731-733). According to Schmitt (2001: 750) the name of a ruler in western Iran in 737 BC, Metraku, 'doubtless represents' a hypocoristic based on the theonym Mithra: this is, however, not certain (references from M. Roaf).

[74] Petrosyan 2006; important is the Armenian epic of the hero Mher which is closely connected with the Mithra legend and illustrates the strength of local traditions.

[75] Solecki 1998; see also the map in Solecki 1971: 26.

[76] Zimansky 1985: 5; Salvini 1993-1997: 445.

also to the Assyrians, and this is utilised in the narrative of the capture of the city by Sargon, as presented to Aššur and the Assyrian public: after the lengthy enumeration of the spoils taken from temple and palace, the narrative suddenly jumps to the reaction of Rusa of Urartu who collapses in despair over the news, tearing his crown from his head in the process.[77] Kathryn F. Kravitz has described this very appropriately as 'Rusa's symbolic de-coronation', implying that 'Rusa's kingship was essentially disabled by Sargon's Eighth Campaign'[78] – in reality, Rusa was out of Assyrian reach when he learned of the sack of Musasir and the description given of his reaction in the Letter to Aššur is rather more likely to reflect wishful thinking than the report of an eye witness in Assyrian service. But still, the fact that Musasir's capture and the desecration of Haldi's temple could be envisaged as a crippling blow not just against the kingdom and its inhabitants but also, and especially, against Assyria's arch-enemy speaks clearly of its importance as Urartu's ritual focal point. Yet we must bear in mind that this 'holy city', to use the words of Shalmaneser I, is already attested as a transregional centre of considerable cultural influence centuries before the dynasty founded by Išpuini in the late 9th century BC took control of Urartu.

But Musasir is not the only ancient cult centre and independent kingdom situated on the border region between Assyria and Urartu; let us now turn to Kumme, home of the storm god.

2. *Kumme (Assyrian) / Qumenu (Urartian) – The Holy City of the Storm God*

To the Hurrians and Hittites of the mid second millennium BC, Teššub of Kumme was far more than just one of the many local manifestations of the storm god: he was the unrivalled king of heaven and earth. Teššub of Kumme features in many of the myths and rituals preserved on the tablets from the Hittite capital Hattuša, either in the Hurrian language or else in Hittite compositions of Hurrian origin.[79] Most prominent is the Song of Ullikummi, which relates the story how Teššub's rival Kumarbi created Ullikummi – whose programmatic name means 'Vanquish Kumme!' – and how heroic Teššub defeated this monstrous rock creature.[80] The Hurrian cultural context of city and deity is also evident from two incantations in Hurrian language found at Mari (18th century BC), one of which addresses the 'gods of Kumme' and the other more specifically *Te-šu-ba-am Ku-um-me-né-en*[81]; whether the god was known under his Hurrian name throughout the Near East or whether the Akkadian speakers, for example, referred to him as Adad cannot be decided whenever logographic spellings are used. While it would still seem possible to link the name Kumme with the Akkadian word *kummu* 'cella, sanctuary'[82], a Hurrian etymology, as recently proposed by Gernot Wilhelm[83], may indeed be preferable.

J.N. Postgate[84] suggested on the basis of the Neo-Assyrian evidence that the city of Kumme is to be located in the valley of the Lesser Hābūr. Such a location, although seemingly peripheral, is in fact easily accessed from the west as the Lesser Hābūr converges with the Tigris just north of the most important crossing point of that river; the valley is the gateway into the southern ranges of the Cudi Dağları mountains, while the Jabal Bikhayr range protects it against the south where the Assyrian heartland lies. Postgate's premise is supported by the fact that already the 18th century sources from Šušarra (modern Tell Shemshara near Rania) and Tell Rimah indicate Kumme to be a station in the road network leading from the mountain areas east of the Tigris to the Jezirah,[85] especially if the Nineveh region was to be avoided.

[77] Sg 8: 411-413, see Kravitz 2003: 84, 88, 90-91.

[78] Kravitz 2003: 93.

[79] Schwemer 2001: 456-458.

[80] Hoffner 1998: 55-65.

[81] Schwemer 2001: 302 n. 2224 (with previous literature).

[82] As advocated by Astour 1987: 28.

[83] Wilhelm 1994: 318: Kumme = verbal root *kum-* (denoting a building activity) + suffix *-me* (used to nominalise verbal roots).

[84] Postgate 1973b: 58-59.

[85] The route is described in two letters from Šušarra (Eidem & Læssøe 2001: 70-74 no. 1 and 2), in one using the designation 'road to Kumme' and in the other the itinerary *Za-as-li*.KI – *Še-gi-ib-bu*.KI – *Zi-kum*.KI – *Ú-ra-ú*.KI – *Lu-ut-pí-iš*.KI ending in *māt Hābūrātim* (with instructions to to go before the mountains and roads become snowbound), while the subsequent mention of a Gutian general and a man from Kumme who receive wine rations according to a document from Tell Rimah (Dalley et al. 1976: no. 260) has prompted Mayer (2002: 331) to assume that the Kummean acted as a guide and intermediary on behalf of the delegation from the eastern mountains.

Where specifically the city of Kumme was located is, however, not certain. Postgate[86] suggested the area of Zakho but this is a consequence of his assumption that its known neighbour Ukku must be located in the mountains just north of Zakho: this, in turn, depends on the notion that the description of Sennacherib's campaign of 697 BC into Mount Nipur (= Cudi Dağları)[87] forms a continuous narrative with the following account of the attack on Ukku (see below); yet this is not the case[88] – Sennacherib's inscriptions keep the account regarding Mount Nipur entirely separate from the Ukku testimony. I would argue that the information from the Sargon correspondence calls for a more mountainous location for Kumme than the Zakho area, closer also to the heartland of Urartu, but still on the Lesser Hābūr: for to assume a location in the valley of the Greater Zab[89] is to my mind impossible as this would restrict the easy access from the west that is so clearly in evidence for the shrine of the Kummean storm god. At Zakho, the Lesser Hābūr merges with its major tributary Hezil Çay (Nahr al-Hayzal), a geographical situation which should be connected with the name – and location – of the early second millennium kingdom of Māt Hābūrātim[90] 'country of the Hābūr rivers'; as the Šušarra letters indicate that the 'route of Kumme' coincided (at least in part) with the itinerary suggested for the journey from the Lower Zab to Māt Hābūrātim we should assume that the city of Kumme was situated not too far from the latter. I would expect the city to be located somewhere on the upper reaches of the Lesser Hābūr which can be reached either by following that river or else by following the Hezil Çay and then crossing the Tanintanin Pass (37° 29' N, 42° 59' E) to meet the Hābūr at the village of Başaran (37° 29' N, 43° 07' E). A possible location for Kumme, in my view, is Beytüşşebap (37° 34' N, 43° 09' E; Fig. 17.01), situated a little further upstream from there in one of the few more sizable pockets of agricultural land in the region on a protected position above the river; it boasts a thermal spring, Zümrüt Kaplıcaları ('emerald hot springs'), with water of a temperature of 44° Celsius[91] said to cure rheumatism, heart failure, kidney inflammation, neuralgia and female disorders (www.kevser.org 2008), a feature which surely would recommend the site for a major sanctuary. I am not aware of any archaeological work conducted in the area.

The geographical proximity between Kumme und Ukku is clear from several letters of the correspondence of Sargon II (721-705 BC), most tellingly perhaps in a passage that reports a meeting between their princes: 'The ruler of Ukku has gone to greet Ariye (ruler of Kumme). Opposite him (i.e. at the other side of Kumme's border) there is a town of the Ukkeans at the pass of Kumme, called URU.*El-iz-ki*,[92] and there the ruler of Ukku went to meet [Ariye]'.[93] The pass of Kumme (*né-ri-bi ša* URU.*Ku-u[m-me]*) should be identified with the Süvrihalil Pass (37° 30' N, 43° 24' E), over which a route of about 35 km leads on from Başaran on the Lesser Hābūr to Aşağıdereli (37° 28' N, 43° 31' E) on the Greater Zab, and further upstream on that river is Hakkari which I believe to be Ukku (see below). From there, the route up the Greater Zab offers direct access to the eastern shore of Lake Van, in the first millennium BC the heart of Urartu, while following the Zab downstream

[86] Postgate 1973b: 59. Note that his reconstruction of the historical geography of the region forms the basis for Parker 2001 and 2002.

[87] This identification is certain because of several rock reliefs with inscriptions installed by Sennacherib at Šāh, ca. 14 km northeast of Cizre in the mountains, commemorating the defeat of seven settlements in Mount Nipur, see Frahm 1997: 150-151 (with earlier literature).

[88] The Ukku episode is introduced with the formula *pān nīrīya utēr* 'I turned my yoke (i.e. of the chariot)' which indicates the beginning of a new narrative; see Frahm 1997: 253.

[89] Assumed by Astour 1987: 42-43, who combines *Ú-ra-ú*.KI, a station in the Šušarra itinerary, with URU.*Ú-ra* in the Neo-Assyrian letter SAA 5 111, correctly in my opinion; the letter reports the progress of a timber delivery destined for Khorsabad, shipped via Ura which for that reason indeed must be located on the Greater Zab (or one of its tributaries). Yet to argue that this letter makes it impossible to place Kumme anywhere but on the Greater Zab goes too far as the letter does not mention timber from Kumme (and Ukku) but only lumberjacks from these cities who are rather more mobile. When Lanfranchi & Parpola (1990: 247) tentatively suggested an identification with 'modern Komane on the Greater Zab 9 km SE of Imadiya' [= Amadiya] (for a map see www.atour.com 2008), they repeated, like Diakonoff & Kashkai 1981: 70 s.v. Qumenu, a suggestion by E. Forrer (1928-1932: 268): this identification is unsubstantiated and apparently made solely on the basis of the similarity of the names. This place called Komane may be the same as Kuwani (www.fallingrain.com 2008). This source locates it at 37° 4' 56N 43° 31' 23E and 1.8 nautical miles (= 3.3 km, not 9 km) ESE of Amadiya (internet references supplied by M. Roaf).

[90] For a discussion of the early second millennium sources see Joannès & Ziegler 1995 and Koppen 2004: 28.

[91] Subject to a geothermal energy research project of the Turkish General Directorate of Mineral Research and Exploration, (www.mta.gov.tr 2008).

[92] This town is mentioned as URU.*El-iz-ki* (l. 9) / URU.*El-iz-kun* (l. 13) in connection with Ukku in ND 2487 (Saggs 2001: 120-122, pl. 25), a letter from the Nimrud correspondence of Sargon written by Nabû-uṣalla, the author of SAA 5 104, a letter which deals with Kumme.

[93] SAA 1 41 ll. 14-r. 2 (Parpola 1987).

brings the traveller to Shanidar, where we assume the border of Musasir to be, and from there via either the Kelishin or the Gawre Shinke Pass to the shores of Lake Urmia or else on to Arbail and the heart of Assyria. Despite the apparent remoteness of these locations, then, they are very well connected to the transregional road network; that Arişa of Kumme can supply carnelian stone to the Assyrians is perhaps a testament of this.[94]

For more than a millennium, the temple of the storm god of Kumme can be shown to have ranked high among the most important Near Eastern sanctuaries. Already in the 18th century BC, he was invoked in a treaty[95] between Zimri-Lim of Mari and the ruler of Kurdâ, a kingdom situated in the Jebel Sinjar; Zimri-Lim also dedicated a precious vase to the temple of the storm god at Kumme.[96] The prominence of deity and shrine may have been a reason why Kumme retained its sovereignty during the time of the Assyrian empire: the storm god of Kumme was also revered at the city of Assur,[97] and Adad-nerari II (911-891 BC) visited his shrine to perform sacrifices in 895, calling the deity ^{d}IM *šá* URU.*Ku-um-me* EN-*ia* 'the storm god of Kumme, my lord'[98] – one of the relatively few mentions of an Assyrian king honouring a deity while on campaign and an appellation that emphasises an existing close relationship. The visit to Kumme was combined with the attempt to intimidate the surrounding region, called 'the cities of Habhu, enemies of Kumme', into paying tribute to the Assyrians in the form of horses yet as these payments did not materialise in the following year, Kumme was visited for a second time and the cities URU.*Sa-at-ku-ri*, URU.*Ia'-sa-ad-du*, URU.*Ku-un-nu* and URU.*Tap-si-a* were destroyed,[99] the last also known from the inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III (745-727 BC) as a 'fortress of Urartu' in or near the land of Ullubu[100] – the region on the Lesser Hābūr north of Dohuk,[101] previously known as Māt Hābūrātim – which was annexed to Assyria in 739.[102] It may be assumed that the extraction of tribute was the main reason for Adad-nerari's call on Kumme but it is important to note that both occasions were presented as visits 'to the assistance of the city of Kumme'. The relationship between Assyria and Kumme appears cordial during the reign of Assurnasirpal II (883-859 BC) who entertained delegates from Kumme – as well as Musasir, as we have seen – among the foreign notables at the inauguration of his new residence city,[103] and also afterwards visitors from Kumme would seem to be not unusual in Kalhu: in 797 BC, we find a man from Kumme acting as a witness for a transaction authorized by the governor of Kalhu.[104] This man may perhaps have fled his native city, as at around that time Minua of Urartu (c. 810-785 BC) was able to establish control over, *inter alia*, Uliba and Qumenu (which correspond to the Assyrian place names Ulluba and Kumme), 'as far as Assyria',[105] the invasion is likely to have caused some of the inhabitants to take refuge in Assyria. Minua's claims are indirectly confirmed by the fact that in Tiglath-pileser's official reports on the annexation of Ulluba in 739, several settlements – two of which are near Kumme (the already mentioned Tapsia and Babutta, see below) – are designated as Urartian fortresses. But already during the reign of Minua's father Išpuini, Kumme is attested in a prominent role, for the inscription of Meher Kapısı near Van lists the sacrifices due to the 'god of the people of Qumenu (Kumme)' after the 'god of the people of Ardini (Muṣaṣir)' and the 'god of the people of Ṭušpa (Ṭurušpa)'.[106]

Yet the best documentation for Kumme dates to the reign of Sargon II when it is frequently mentioned in the royal correspondence[107] while references from the official inscriptions are entirely lacking. At that time,

[94] SAA 5 284.

[95] Joannès 1991: 176-177 M. 7750 l. 4' ^{d}IM *be-el Ku-um-mi-im*.KI; cf. Schwemer 2001: 301-302 and Mayer 2002: 330.

[96] Guichard 2005: 438 no. 133 (= ARM VII 219) 7 ^{d}IM *ša Ku-um-mé*.

[97] Mentioned in the so-called Götteradressbuch, l. 115 ^{d}IM *šá Ku-me* (Menzel 1981: II T 154).

[98] Grayson 1991: 152 A.0.99.2 ll. 91-93.

[99] Grayson 1991: 152 A.0.99.2 ll. 94-96.

[100] Tadmor 1994: 126-127 Summary Inscription 1: 27-28; 182-183 Summary Inscription 9 l. 12'.

[101] The region can be located due to the rock relief at Milla Mergi, see Postgate 1973b: 57.

[102] Radner 2006: 56-57 no. 40.

[103] Grayson 1991: 293 A.0.101.30 l. 147 KUR.*Ku-ma-a-a*.

[104] CTN 2 91 r. 18 ^{PN}*Lid-bu-bu ša* URU.*Ku-me* (Postgate 1973a).

[105] König 1955-1957: 58-59 HchI 16 (CTU A 5-9 upper side: l. 10 KUR.*Ú-li-ba-a-ni*; l. 19 URU.*Qu-me-nu-ú-ni pa-ri* KUR.*A-šú-ri-i-ni*). See the discussion by Salvini 1995: 51.

[106] König 1955-1957: 51 HchI 10 (CTU A 3-1 l. 55, URU.*Qu-me-nu-na-ú-e* DINGIR); cf. Salvini 1986: 32 who argued that the Urartian god Teišeba corresponds or at least was associated to Teššub of Kumme.

[107] SAA 1 29, 41, 46, 233; SAA 5 94-95, 97-98, 100-102, 104-107, 117; SAA 15 284 (= Fuchs & Parpola 2001).

Kumme was one of several cities to the north of Assyria that enjoyed the leadership of a local ruler. The city is not mentioned at all in the sources surviving from Tiglath-pileser III's reign although his annexation of the Ullubu region on the Lesser Hābūr in 739 had certainly extended Assyrian influence into the more immediate vicinity of Kumme. The sudden proximity of an Assyrian province and the continuous military presence that this entailed would not have allowed Kumme and the other cities in the area to maintain the cavalier approach to any duties imposed by the Assyrian king that was so clearly in evidence during the times of Adad-nerari II. Hence, during the reign of Sargon, we see the ruler of Kumme, Ariye (and Arişa, presumably his crown prince), follow the command of the Assyrian king and supply men, horses, timber and information about the other independent states of the region and especially about Urartu. In a letter from the royal correspondence,[108] some local rulers, among them the leaders of Kumme, Ukku and Babutta – the last known from the inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III as a 'fortress of Urartu' subdued in 739[109] – are described as 'city lords' which indicates their nominal independence but also the limited size of their territory. Kumme's cooperation was ensured by the presence of the Assyrian ambassador (*qēpu* 'the trusted one') Aššur-rēṣūwa whose frequent letters to the Assyrian court vividly illustrate his activities, mainly related to intelligence and the organization of the local workforce, especially for cutting and shipping timber.[110] While Aššur-rēṣūwa was stationed in Kumme, a fort was built with the support of several Assyrian governors, giving rise to Urartian plans to kidnap the said governors from Kumme[111] (we do not know whether this was in fact attempted). Aššur-rēṣūwa's presence in Kumme eventually sparked a conflict between him and some local dignitaries, with both sides trying to assassinate each other,[112] and we would like to know how this struggle for power ended. As Kumme also continued to entertain close relations with the king of Urartu who also expected men and information to come forward,[113] it comes as no surprise that men from Kumme were repeatedly accused of un-Assyrian activities such as illicit trading between Assyria and Urartu.[114] But, when the new Urartian king Argišti II, son of Rusa, sent a pointed message questioning the conspicuous absence of messengers from Kumme at his court, the answer from Kumme, according to the information conveyed back to Sargon, was this: 'Since we are the slaves of Assyria, a foreman of the cavalry is our superior; only the houses of Kumme are left to us.... We cannot put our feet anywhere.'[115] The caution with which the Kummeans are seen treading here may be a result of Sargon's desecration of Musasir and the Haldi temple in 714 – Urzana's difficulties in finding the right balance between Assyrian and Urartian interests and the dire consequences must have sent a disturbing message to the small kingdoms in a similar position, and the fact that even an ancient and famous temple had not stopped Sargon must have been most alarming to Kumme and its storm god sanctuary. But at this junction, our information about Kumme dries up[116] and to decide whether the Assyrians continued to respect the city's autonomy or not is left to our imagination; unlike Ukku, the city is not mentioned in the sources from Sennacherib's reign at all.

3. Ukku

Until quite recently, the archaeology of the area of Hakkari was virtually unknown but with excavations at this Turkish provincial capital since 1997 and the chance discovery of 13 warrior steles in 1998[117] the region

[108] SAA 5 117.
[109] Tadmor 1994: 126-127 Summary Inscription 1 ll. 27-28 URU.*Ba-bu-ut-ta*.
[110] The letters of Aššur-rēṣūwa: SAA 5 84-100.
[111] SAA 1 29.
[112] SAA 5 106, SAA 5 107.
[113] For Kumme, see e.g. SAA 5 95, SAA 5 105.
[114] SAA 1 46, SAA 5 100 (with SAA 5 103).
[115] SAA 5 95 ll. 12-18.
[116] Kumme is mentioned also in two administrative texts from Nineveh: the inscription on a sack sealing BM 50794, bearing an impression of the Assyrian royal seal type, identifies the shipment as coming from the ruler of Kumme (SAA 11 58 URU.*Ku-ma-a-a* (= Fales & Postgate 1995)), and a certain Izzia from KUR.*Ku-um-mu* is mentioned in the administrative fragment SAA 7 31 i 7' (= Fales & Postgate 1992). The dates of these two texts are not certain.
[117] Sevin & Özfirat 2001, Sevin 2005.

– marked '3' in map 1 – is quickly developing an archaeological profile. The age of the unique steles, which were found in front of a rock precipice at the foot of the mount with Hakkari castle on top, cannot be decided with certainty although the representations of the weapons carried by the warriors, especially the daggers and axes, can be linked with actual finds dating to the end of the second and the beginning of the first millennium BC.[118] Yet the area was inhabited already much earlier: Radiocarbon readings from the lower stratum of a chamber grave (M2) excavated in the steles' immediate vicinity gave dates at the beginning of the second millennium BC[119] matching the date of the painted pottery typical of the so-called Van-Urmia culture,[120] while the upper stratum yielded finds that can be dated to the very end of the second millennium.[121] Another chamber grave (M1) can also be dated to the Late Bronze Age / Early Iron Age.[122]

Following the considerations put forward in our discussion of Kumme, I propose that Hakkari corresponds to Ukku,[123] as attested in the Neo-Assyrian sources during the reigns of Sargon II (721-705 BC)[124] and Sennacherib (704-681 BC). In addition to the arguments already given, we should note that Ukku shares a border with Urartu, being situated 'opposite' an Urartian province of unknown name.[125] As far as we know, Ukku is not mentioned in the Urartian sources, at least not under a name that is easily recognizable; I am also not aware of any Mesopotamian attestations prior to the reign of Sargon II.

But then, Ukku is elsewhere documented in a singular fashion: Sennacherib had the city depicted in the throne room of his Nineveh palace (Fig. 17.07),[126] identified by a lengthy epigraph:[127]

> Sennacherib, king of the universe, king of Assyria: Maniye, king of Ukku, feared the onslaught of my battle and deserted Ukku, his power base, and fled to distant parts. I pursued the people dwelling therein (i.e. in Ukku) who had like birds flown to the summit of the inaccessible mountains and defeated them at the summit. I burned his royal city Ukku.

This corresponds to the accounts given for Sennacherib's 697 campaign which add some colourful details: Maniye is, like Urzana before him, called a mountain dweller (*šad-da-a-a-e*), the Assyrian camp is said to have been pitched at the foot of Mount KUR.*A-na-ra* and Mount KUR.*Up-pa*, and Sennacherib is carried up into the mountains, where none of his royal predecessors are said to have set foot before him, on a sedan chair; Maniye's palace is looted and the spoils transported off to Assyria, as are people, donkeys, cattle and sheep captured from 33 settlements which are destroyed[128]. The relief shows in front of a massive mountain range the city of Ukku; it is without fortifications but the buildings are depicted as tower-like structures with small windows, clustered together in three separate groups around an enormous building of a different sort, apparently the royal palace mentioned in the inscriptions. The unusual texture given to the structure seems to indicate that it is built out of enormous stone blocks. Also this building has several floors: it has three square gateways on the ground level and several openings on the second floor but unfortunately the top part of the building is broken away. The image conveys a type of architecture very different from the mud brick constructions of Assyria but well suited for the harsh winters for which the region is known. Below the city, the Assyrian army is depicted in three levels, carrying off horses and equipment; the lowest level, as far as preserved, shows

[118] Sevin & Özfirat 2001: 21-22.

[119] Özfirat 2002: 222.

[120] Özfirat 2002.

[121] Sevin & Özfirat 2001: 22.

[122] Özfirat 2002: 209.

[123] The excavators have so far considered only Hubuškia which I find unconvincing (see above, n. 1).

[124] Only in letters: SAA 1 29, 31, 41-42; SAA 5 87-88, 91, 96, 102, 111, 117, 129, 147, 190, 284-286; ND 2433 (= Saggs 2001: 109-111, pl. 23); ND 2487 (= Saggs 2001: 120-122, pl. 25).

[125] The province is ruled during the reign of Sargon (presumably not simultaneously) by the governors Kaqqadānu (SAA 5 87) and Sunâ (SAA 5 88); this province is also mentioned in SAA 5 147 and probably also in SAA 5 286.

[126] Throne room = Room I, slabs 1-2. For Layard's original drawings (Or. Dr. IV, 3; reproduced in this article) see Russell 1991: 248 fig. 127 and Barnett, Bleibtreu & Turner 1998: I 50-51, II pl. 31 no. 19-19a.

[127] Frahm 1997: 124-125; Russell 1999: 283-284. The suggested identification of the city with 'a Phoenician city, perhaps Sidon' (Barnett, Bleibtreu & Turner 1998: I 50) is impossible because of the accompanying inscription.

[128] Luckenbill 1924: 37-38 Chicago Prism iv 13-31; 72 Nineveh Bull inscription ll. 42-47.

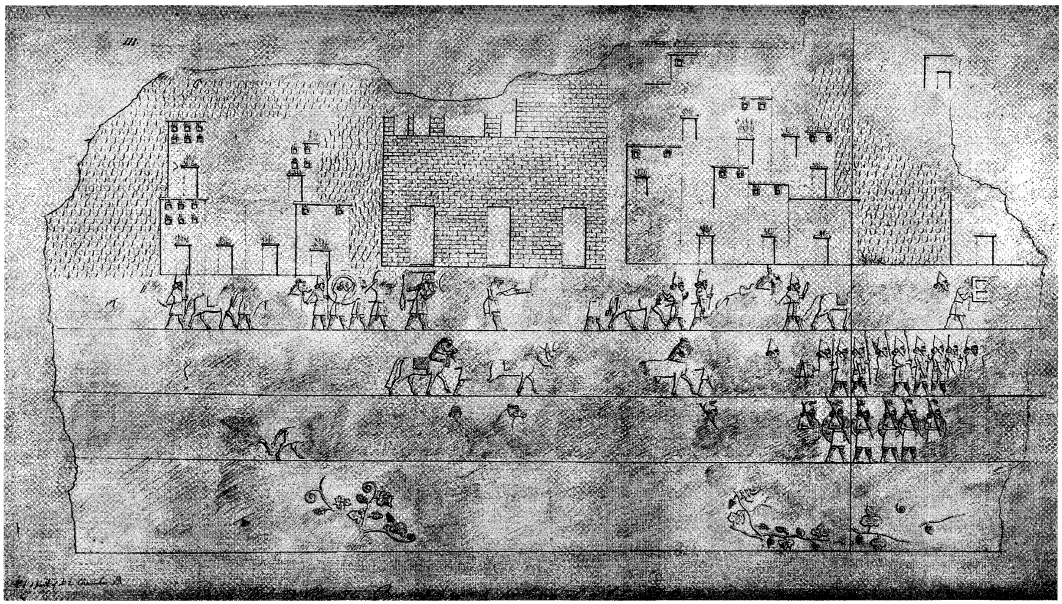

Fig. 17.07. The city of Ukku: A.H. Layard's original drawing (British Museum, WAA, Or. Dr. IV, 3) of Slabs 1-2 in Room I (the Throne Room) of Sennacherib's palace in Nineveh (reproduced from Barnett, Bleibtreu & Turner 1998: vol. II pl. 31).

vines, a plant that thrives in these south-facing mountain flanks. The next relief slab in this sequence[129] shows the Assyrian soldiers in a mountain landscape with a great many trees, rounding up the fleeing Ukkeans who are shown in various stages of collapse; the captives are led down to the Assyrian fort, depicted in the usual style of that period. Neither reliefs nor inscriptions reveal anything about the fate of Maniye, king of Ukku; did he manage to escape to Urartu as would seem likely? Did he eventually return to Ukku?

It is quite probable that king Maniye ruled Ukku already during the reign of Sargon when Sennacherib, as the crown prince of Assyria, was closely involved in the affairs with the small northern states. Two of Sennacherib's letters[130] to his king and father deal directly with the ruler of Ukku, who, as in all other texts from that period, is not identified by name: in one letter he acts as a loyal ally should, to the Assyrian mind at least, and reports on Urartu's crushing defeat at the hands of the Cimmerians but in the other letter, he is said to pass on sensitive information to Urartu and to encroach on the rights of the ruler of nearby Arzabia, a policy Sennacherib wants him to stop, volunteering himself as a negotiator. In other letters from Sargon's reign, Ukku is seen to be in cahoots with Urartu, sending regular messengers[131] – and even the very same ones sent to Assyria[132], clearly a security risk – to the enemy state, withholding information from Assyrian agents[133] and trying to sway also Kumme's loyalty in Urartu's favour.[134] Sennacherib's experiences with Ukku in his time as a crown prince may well have influenced his decision to invade the country in 679 but ultimately, this must be seen in the context of Assyria's relationship with Urartu: by attacking Ukku, Sennacherib moved directly onto

[129] Throne room = Room I, slabs 3. For Layard's original drawing (Or. Dr. IV, 4) see Russell 1991: 249 fig. 128 and Barnett, Bleibtreu & Turner 1998: I 51, II pl. 32-33 no. 20-20b.
[130] SAA 1 29; SAA 1 31.
[131] SAA 1 29, 41; SAA 5 96.
[132] SAA 5 96.
[133] SAA 5 91.
[134] SAA 1 41.

the Urartian border yet the aggression does not seem to have resulted in any direct conflict between Urartu and Assyria – but then, we only have the official inscriptions to account for this period, and were we to rely on only this material also for the reign of Sargon, we wouldn't know anything about Ukku – or even Kumme.

Let us now leave the Lesser Hābūr and the Greater Zab and turn to a kingdom on the banks of the Tigris that is much better known to us, Šubria.

4. *Šubria (Assyrian) = Qulmeri (Urartian) – birth place of the Tigris*

In the first millennium, the kingdom of Šubria (Fig. 17.01) was situated in the mountainous regions to the north of the Assyrian holdings on the Upper Tigris, stretching from the Tigris and its headwaters in the west to the substantial mountain ranges in the north and in the east which bordered onto Urartu; the western and southern boundary of the country was the Tigris, shared with the Assyrian provinces of Amēdi and Tušhān.

'Šubria' is of course only the Assyrian name for this kingdom; the term is derived from the old Sumerian designation Subir and its Akkadian counterpart Subartu and denotes, like these names do, simply a 'northern country'. Without any indigenous sources available to us, we can only guess under what name the country was known to its inhabitants. The Urartians, in any case, called it Qulmeri,[135] after its capital city which, as Kullimeri, is also well attested in Assyrian texts. And this is indeed the most likely candidate for the country's native designation, especially as Kullimeri is also mentioned, in the guise of the corrupted spelling *klmd* (< *klmr*), as one of the trading partners of the Phoenician city of Tyre in the description of its trade network in the Bible[136].

The other centre of the kingdom is Uppummu, first mentioned as URU.*Ú-pu-m*[*e*][137] of Anhitte, the ruler of Šubria, attested in this office since the time of Assurnasirpal II (883-859 BC).[138] The city is mentioned in the label accompanying the depiction of the siege of the city (a rather generic image of a fortress in the mountains) (Fig. 17.08) on the monumental Balawat gate of Shalmaneser III (858-824 BC) who captured Uppummu in 854 BC; that URU.*I-pu-me* in the inscription of the Nimrud throne base is the very same place is clear from the context: it identifies URU.*Kul-me-ru*'[139] as Anhitte's royal residence city from whence he fled to Uppummu.[140] This second Šubrian centre probably corresponds to the site of Fum (38° 22' N, 40° 44' E) near the modern town of Lice.[141] As it lies in the extreme west of the country, we must seek the city of Kullimeri in the eastern part of Šubria, as otherwise the division of Šubria in 673 into a western and an eastern Assyrian province, known after their capitals as Uppummu and Kullimeri,[142] would be difficult to imagine. It is therefore attractive to accept Karlheinz Kessler's suggestion to identify Kullimeri with the site of Grē Migro[143] (38° 01' N, 41° 11' E), 'at 40 m by far the highest mound in the eastern bank of the Batman Su'[144] and situated

[135] Diakonoff & Kashkai 1981: 69 s.v. Qulmēre.

[136] Ezekiel 17:23; see Aubet 1993: 101 and Freedman (ed.) 2000: 236 s.v. Chilmad.

[137] Grayson 1996: 144 A.0.102.73.

[138] Anhitte delivered tribute to Aššurnasirpal II at Tušhan (modern Ziyaret Tepe): Grayson 1991: 202 A.0.101.1 ii 12; 243 A.0.101.17 ii 39: ^{PN}*An-hi-te* KUR.*Šub-ri-a-a*.

[139] Note that this earliest attestation of Kullimeri in the Assyrian sources (so far thought to occur first in the Sargon letters, see Kessler 1995: 56) has hitherto been misread as URU.*Has-me-tu*. To mistake the sign *kul* = NUMUN for *has* = TAR is very easy and without collation of the original stone it is impossible to be certain whether Peter Hulin (1963) slightly distorted the sign or whether it is a genuine scribal mistake as seems to be the case with the last sign, TU instead of RU, which at least bear sufficient resemblance to each other to account for the confusion. The relevant section of the inscription is not visible in the published photographs.

[140] Grayson 1996: 104 A.0.102.28 l. 44 'I marched to the land KUR.*Šub-re-e*. Anhitti, the Šubrian, abandoned his royal city URU.*Kul-me-ru*' (copy: *tu*) in order to save his life and entered the city URU.*I-pu-me*. I confined him to his city.' The campaign is also reported, albeit in less detail, in various other inscriptions, Grayson 1996: 36 A.0.102.6 ii 16-18; 45 A.0.102.8 ll. 11'-12'; 52 A.0.102.10 ii 9-12; 65 A.0.102.14 ll. 52-54; 75 A.0.102.16 ll. 26-27.

[141] As suggested by Sarkisian 1989: 32, 80 (English summary) and – independently – by Kessler 1995: 57. In the absence of archaeological remains having been identified at Fum dating to the ninth to seventh centuries BC it is quite possible that the ancient Uppummu was a different site in the vicinity perhaps the tell of Lice.

[142] Borger 1956: 107: Gottesbrief iv 12-13; see Radner 2006: 63-64 no. 64 and no. 66.

[143] As suggested by Kessler 1995: 57-58; see Parker 2001: 231-232 for the Iron Age results of Algaze's survey project.

some 25 km to the north of the confluence with the Tigris. Its location also matches the scenario of Anhitte's flight from the Assyrian army which advanced from Mount Kašiāri, the modern Tur Abdin, to the inner regions of his kingdom.

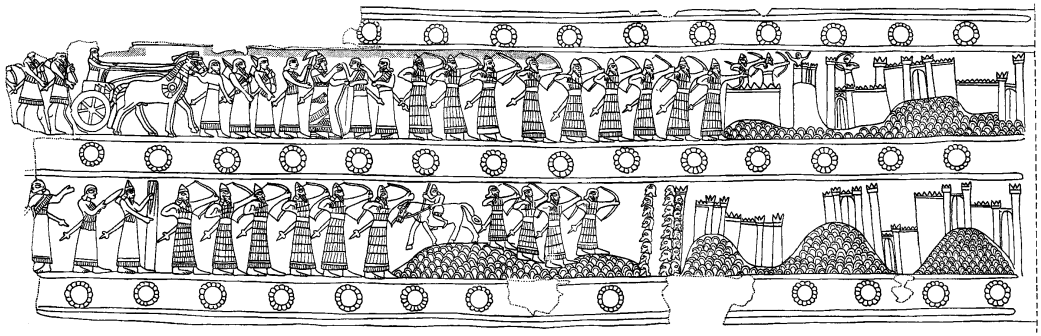

Fig. 17.08. The city of Uppume (top right) depicted on Band VIII of the Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III. It is possible that the city in the lower register was also in Šubria. Drawn by Cornelie Wolff.

In Middle Assyrian texts, Hurrian-speakers – whether they lived in Assyria or elsewhere – are designated as Šubarû / Šubrû[145] and already this detail alerts us to the fact that first millennium Šubria may also be termed a Hurrian state: the Šubrian language required the assistance of interpreters to be understood by Assyrians[146] (some Hurrian words, with translations, are preserved in a letter from Sargon's correspondence).[147] That the kingdom preserved the ancient heritage of the Hurrian tradition into the 8th and 7th century BC, when Assyrian sources offer us some insight, is clear from the fact that the members of the royal house bore Hurrian names, like Sargon's ally Hu-Teššub, Esarhaddon's contemporary Ik-Teššub and his son [...]gi-Teššub. The Tigris Grotto, perhaps Šubria's most important sanctuary (see below), was a natural shrine, combining the attractions of a spring and a mountain cave, and this fits well with Hurrian concepts of the divine.[148] Furthermore the scholars of Šubria pursued Hurrian disciplines: they performed the ancient art of augury and the scapegoat rituals typical of the Hurrian tradition.[149]

Augury was a branch of learning typical of Northern Syria and Anatolia, rather than of Mesopotamia, and when augurs are attested in Assyria[150] their origins are usually specified: these augurs from Hamath, Kummuhhu (Commagene) and Šubria are the heirs of a well documented second millennium tradition practised already by Idrimi of Alalah and the experts in the service of the Hittite kings.[151] Our earliest evidence for Šubrian augury dates to the reign of Tiglath-pileser III (744-727 BC). Šubria was then allied with Assyria, and we encounter Parnialdê, a scholar in the service of the Šubrian king, not only as an informer of the Assyrian officer active in the region but also as a potential advisor to Tiglath-pileser himself. After urging the king to

[144] Algaze 1989: 243 (with map on p. 257 and contour plan of the site on p. 259); survey results indicate that the site was inhabited during the Late Chalcolithic period, the Middle and Late Bronze Age, the Iron Age and the Classical period: Algaze 1989: 244-245.

[145] For references see Nashef 1982: 234-236.

[146] For Šubrian translators (*targumannu ša Šubrê*) in Assyria see Ulshöfer 2000: 166.

[147] SAA 5 35 l. 31 *a-ba-ti*; r. 11: *te-bal a-da*.

[148] As reflected by the evocative title 'Hethitische Berggötter und hurritische Steindämonen' of Haas 1982; for a discussion of the Tigris, the birth of the Tigris and Tigris Grotto see Haas 1982: 146-147.

[149] For the rituals performed by the augurs of Arzawa in the Hittite period see Bawanypeck 2005: 126-148, 241-264, 293-295. For the first millennium evidence see Janowski & Wilhelm 1993.

[150] Discussed in detail by Radner 2009: 226-238.

[151] For in-depth discussions see Ünal 1973 and Archi 1975; for a recent summary see Bawanypeck 2005: 1-11.

campaign into the very heart of Urartu to its capital Turušpa,[152] the author continues his letter:[153] '(Concerning) the seal(ed letter) of the king, which the king, my lord, has sent to me: I went and questioned Parnaldê.' A report follows on the recent manoeuvres of Urartian messengers who are busy forging alliances on behalf of their country, and then:[154]

> Parnaldê and your servant (i.e. the author) have talked, but maybe I have told lies to the king, my lord? (Therefore) let the king, my lord, write to the Šubrian (king) that he should send Parnaldê, his augur. The king, my lord, may ask him why the birds make (the suggested campaign) favourable.

The possibility that the king of Šubria sent an augur to the Assyrian court allows us to speculate about the way scholarly expertise was exchanged; this case suggests that experts in the royal retinue could be dispatched abroad by their patrons for shorter periods, in the expectation that they would return reasonably soon. Walter Burkert's idea about the activities of 'itinerant oriental scholars'[155] to explain the 'orientalizing revolution' in the Greek world was met with some scepticism, in particular from Assyriologists who have focussed on the scholars' lives in the shadow of their royal patron. Yet the fact that the rulers of the 8th century would consider it appropriate to dispatch their top experts abroad on state business gives us ample opportunities to reconsider the transfer of ideas, spearheaded not just by fugitives and disgraced exiles outside of the royal entourage[156] but also by the rulers' most valued specialists. While it is unknown whether Tiglath-pileser in fact summoned Parnaldê, it is clear from a contemporaneous administrative memorandum that the Assyrian royal court indeed housed Šubrian augurs: this memorandum listed wine libations for the gods of Kalhu and other ritual activities, including those of eight augurs, at least one of whom is said to be from Šubria.[157] The latest evidence for Šubrian augurs was only recently excavated in Ziyaret Tepe, the Assyrian provincial capital of Tušhān on the Upper Tigris: a legal document from one of the very last years of the Assyrian empire[158] is witnessed by a Šubrian augur,[159] and this man, or another augur, is also mentioned in a short administrative memorandum.[160]

Šubrian independence ended in 673 during the reign of Esarhaddon (680-669 BC) with its conquest and subsequent integration into the Assyrian empire.[161] The murderers of Esarhaddon's father and predecessor Sennacherib, who while alive endangered Esarhaddon's rule as well as any hope of a peaceful succession, were rumoured to have found refuge in the area. The Šubrian king Ik-Teššub, hitherto a trusted ally, stood accused of harbouring Esarhaddon's enemies. He attempted to prove his loyalty by having an elaborate scapegoat ritual performed: he had an effigy of himself created which was dressed in sackcloth, placed in fetters and equipped with a grindstone (as a symbol of slavery)[162] and had his two sons bring it to Esarhaddon who was asked to transfer all the crimes of Ik-Teššub onto the effigy and forgive the king himself.[163] But the persuasive force of

[152] For this part of the letter see Radner 2005: 95.

[153] ND 2673 = CTN 5 136-138 ll. 12-15 [12] [N]A_4.*un-qi* LUGAL *ša ina* UGU-*hi-ia* [L]UGA[L] [13] EN *iš-pu*[*r*] *-a-ni a-ta-al-ka* [14] *a-na* ^{PN}*Pa-*[*a*]*r-*[*n*]*i-al-de-*^{r}*e*$^{}$ [15] *a-sa-al.*

[154] ND 2673 = CTN 5 136-138, pl. 27 r. 11'-17' [11'] ^{PN}*Pa-ar-ni-al-de-e* LÚ*.ARAD-ka [12'] *i-da-bu-bu i-su-ri a-na-ku* [13'] *la ket-tú ina* IGI LUGAL EN-*ía aq-ṭí-bi* [14'] LUGAL E[N] *a-na* KUR.*Šub-ri-ia-a-e liš-pur* [15'] ^{PN}*Pa*$^{!}$-[*ar*]*-na-al-de-e* LÚ*.*da-gíl*-MUŠEN.MEŠ-šú [16'] *lu-*[*še-bí*]*-la* LUGAL EN *li-iš-al-šú* [17'] [*ma-a a-na m*]*ì-i-ni* MUŠEN.MEŠ *ú-ṭa-bu-ni.* My reading follows the copy on pl. 27. Lines 14'-15' are quoted by Parpola 1993: XXXIV n. 4.

[155] Burkert 1983; 1992.

[156] Cf. Rollinger 1996: 206-208.

[157] Wiseman 1953: 147, pl. 14 = ND 3476 ll. 1-5, r. 1'-4' [1] 8 *qa* ^{d}*Šá-maš* [2] 2 *qa* ^{d}MAŠ [3] 1 ^{d}AG [4] 1 ^{d}15 [5] 1 *ša* GIŠ.BANŠUR (remainder of obverse too fragmentary); reverse (after a break): [1'] KUR.*Šu*$^{!}$*-ub*$^{!}$*-ri-a-a* [2'] PAP 8 LÚ*.*da-gíl*-MUŠEN.MEŠ [3'] PAP 2-BÁN 8 *qa* SUR.ME[Š] [4'] *ka-a-a-m*[*a-nu*]*-te* 'Eight litres, Šamaš. Two litres, Ninurta. One litre, Nabû. One litre, Ištar. One litre, for the table. [...] from Šubria, a total of eight augurs. In total, two seah eight litres, the customary libation offerings.'

[158] According to the reconstruction of Reade 1998: 257 Nabû-tappûtu-alik was eponym of the year 616 BC.

[159] ZT 12048 ll. 12-13 [12] IGI ^{PN}MU–GIŠ LÚ*.*da-gíl*-MUŠEN [13] *Šub-ri-ia-a-a*; partially preserved in the fragmentary envelope ZT 12049 r. 5. I owe this reference and the following one to Simo Parpola whose edition of the texts from Ziyaret Tepe has now appeared in the *State Archives of Assyria Bulletin* (Parpola 2008: 40-44 nos. 4-5).

[160] ZT 13463 l. 5 LÚ*.*da-*[*gí*]*l-*[MUŠE]N (Parpola 2008: 98-100 no. 25).

[161] For the political background of the annexation of Šubria see Oppenheim 1979: 123-133, Leichty 1991: 56-57 and Deszö 2006: 35-37.

[162] Toorn 1986; note that the king in question (p. 249) is Ik-Teššub, not Rusa.

[163] Known from the information preserved in Esarhaddon's Letter to Aššur (Borger 1956: 105 Götterbrief II ii 18-27); see the discussion by Leichty 1991: 54. Note also the possible connection with the letter SAA 16 164, advocated by Luukko & Van Buylaere 2002: XXXIX.

the Syro-Anatolian Hurrian ritual tradition was not successful, for Esarhaddon refused to accept the replacement and had his army invade Šubria: the kingdom was subdued, annexed and split into two Assyrian provinces,[164] and, with the Assyrian refugees from Šubria dealt with, the next year, 672 BC, saw the announcement of Esarhaddon's succession arrangements.

Esarhaddon also handed all Urartian fugitives found in Šubria over to Rusa; this would indicate that there was an agreement between Assyria and Urartu in place, guaranteeing that Rusa would not get involved in the conflict in exchange for the extradition of the refugees who might otherwise have been used against Urartian interests. That Esarhaddon had previously worried about Urartu's position is clear from a query to the sun god[165] which we can put in the context of agreeing the pact[166] with Rusa who may here be referred to as the king of Biainili; if the restoration proves to be correct, this would be the only known Assyrian attestation of that name; clearly, the diviners wanted to make perfectly sure that the sun god understood who was under investigation:

> Will Ursa (= Rusa), king of Urartu, whom they call Yaya [...], whom they call king of KUR.*Pa*-[*i-ni-li*][167], strive and plan? Will he, [either by his own wish] or on the advice of his counsellors, together with his army or with the Cimmerians or any of his allies take the road from where they are (now) to wage war, kill, plunder and loot and come to Šubria, either to URU.*Pu-ú-mu* or to URU.*Kul-im-me-ri* or to (any other of) the fortresses of Šubria? Will they kill what there is to kill, plunder what there is to plunder and loot what there is to loot? Of the fortresses of Šubria, will they annex a few or many and turn them into their own?

Šubria's reputation as a haven for refugees from Assyria and Urartu alike is not only apparent from Esarhaddon's official reports but also clear from several letters of the political correspondence of Sargon II which indicate that this was a major problem in the otherwise easy relationship between Assyria and Šubria,[168] people from as far away as Mê-Turān[169] on the Diyala fled to Šubria to escape justice and could expect the king of Šubria to refuse their extradition. This remarkable behaviour has to be recognized to constitute a deliberate policy on Šubria's behalf, not at all in evidence for any of the other border kingdoms, and should therefore not just be seen as the result of the geographical position of the kingdom between Assyria and Urartu.[170] Yet it seems anachronistic to assume that Šubria offered asylum 'as a means of defiance and "neutrality" between the imperial powers', as Bradley Parker argues,[171] what did Šubria stand to gain from such actions which were directed, after all, against both powerful neighbours in equal measure?[172] Tamas Deszö has recently argued that Šubria's policy was anchored in a religious tradition and proposed to assume the existence of a refuge sanctuary at Uppummu[173]. I agree with his assessment and would moreover suggest the nearby Tigris Grotto to be this very place, a holy precinct in open nature, with unlimited water and shelter from the powers of nature offered by three caves in addition to the river grotto itself.[174]

While little else is known about Šubria's gods and temples, it is obvious that the 'Tigris source', as the riverine cave system at Birkleyn (38° 32' N, 40° 33' E) was known to the Assyrians and probably also to the Šubrians themselves, must have been highly esteemed as a sanctuary, not only locally but also internationally.

[164] For Šubria's fate under Assyrian rule see Radner & Schachner 2001: 772-773 for a discussion of the governors of the Šubrian provinces and Çilingiroğlu & Salvini 2001: 21-22 for the Urartian invasion in 657 BC.

[165] SAA 4 18 ll. 4-11 (= Starr 1990).

[166] Compare e.g. the oracle query SAA 4 20, inquiring into the intentions of the Scythian king when a treaty between him and Esarhaddon was considered.

[167] Not recognized in the edition. While in Neo-Assyrian itself, the voiced and unvoiced plosives p and b are mostly if not always written correctly (Hämeen-Anttila 2000: 15-16 it is conceivable that the initial phoneme of the Urartian word Biainili would have been realised with an initial p as Urartian phonology differed considerably from Neo-Assyrian.

[168] SAA 5 35, 53, 54.

[169] As is the case in the situation discussed in the letter SAA 5 53.

[170] As does Kessler 1986: 65.

[171] Parker 2002: 384.

[172] According to Esarhaddon's Letter to Aššur (Borger 1956: 105 Götterbrief II iii 28-34), Ik-Teššub of Šubria had refused to extradite Urartian refuges to Rusa. See Leichty 1991: 55.

[173] Deszö 2006: 37 who speculates about the existence of a Teššub temple in Uppummu.

[174] For the results of a 2004 survey of the site see Schachner (Hrsg.) 2009.

Shalmaneser III of Assyria (858-824 BC) deemed a visit to worship at the 'Tigris source' so important that he had his army take a detour on its march back from inner Anatolia to Assyria in 852 BC; he and his predecessor Tiglath-pileser I (1114-1076 BC) are known to have sacrificed at the 'Tigris source' and both had inscriptions and images fashioned at the site.[175] Furthermore his visit was illustrated in an exceptional double register depiction on the Balawat Gates (Fig. 17.09).

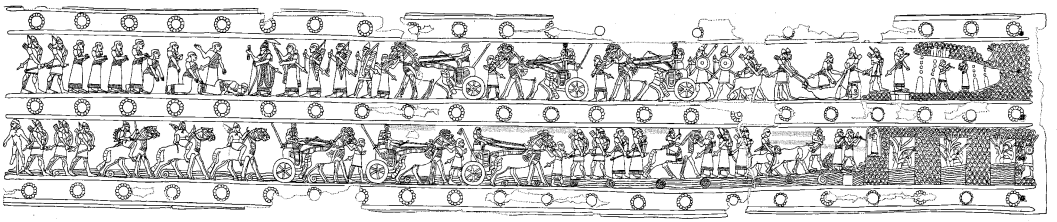

Fig. 17.09. The Tigris Grotto depicted on Band X of the Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III. Drawn by Cornelie Wolff.

Assyrian practice and the fact that the Tigris was considered a major deity in the Hurrian world lead us to conclude that the 'Tigris source' was as famous and important a sanctuary as the temples of Haldi at Musasir and of the storm god at Kumme. It may be significant, then, that Esarhaddon composed a Letter to Aššur, detailing the invasion of Šubria, just as Sargon had done after the capture of Musasir and the looting of Haldi's temple, the only other well-known example of this text genre. Esarhaddon's text is broken where we expect the account of the invasion of Šubria, but the spoils taken from that country are later given to the gods of Assyria, and at least part of these riches must have originated from Šubrian sanctuaries.

Is it coincidence that both the sack of Musasir and the invasion of Šubria are reported to Assyria's divine overlord in a Letter to Aššur, or is this the direct result of the underlying similarities between the cases – an existing alliance with Assyria, secured by a treaty, broken; a sanctuary sacred to and frequented by the Assyrians violated – that may have required the composition of such an account which one might then interpret as a defence statement forwarded to the divine court of law which decided the fate of all according to the Mesopotamian world view? How we see this matter influences how we judge the significance of Sargon's and Esarhaddon's actions in Musasir and Šubria – and the importance of the ancient Hurrian cult centres in the wider world.

[175] For the Assyrian reliefs and inscriptions from the 'Tigris source' see the contributions of Radner and Schachner in Schachner (Hrsg.) 2009.

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Abbreviations

AfO	*Archiv für Orientforschung*
AHw	W. von Soden 1965-1981. *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch*, Wiesbaden
AMI	*Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran*
AMIT	*Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran und Turan*
BAR IS	British Archaeological Reports International Series
CAD	A.L. Oppenheim & E. Reiner (eds.) 1956-. *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*, Chicago-Glückstadt
CTN 5	H.W.F. Saggs 2001. *The Nimrud Letters, 1952*, Cuneiform Texts from Nimrud V, British School of Archaeology in Iraq, London
CTU	M. Salvini 2008. *Corpus dei testi urartei* Vols. 1-3. *Le iscrizioni su pietra e roccia*, Documenta Asiana 8, Rome
HchI	F.W. König 1955-1957. *Handbuch der chaldischen Inschriften*, AfO Beiheft 8, Graz
IFŽ	*Istoriko-filologičeskij Žurnal [Historical-Philological Journal] Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, Yerevan
I.N.	*Ivories from Nimrud*
IstMitt	*Istanbuler Mitteilungen*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
PNA	*The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire*
RlA	*Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie*
SAA	State Archives of Assyria
SAA 1	S. Parpola 1987. *The Correspondence of Sargon II, Part I. Letters from Assyria and the West*, SAA 1, Helsinki
SAA 4	I. Starr 1990. *Queries to the Sun God: Divination and Politics in Sargonid Assyria*, SAA 4, Helsinki
SAA 5	G.B. Lanfranchi & S. Parpola 1990. *The Correspondence of Sargon II, Part II. Letters from the Northern and Northeastern Provinces*, SAA 5, Helsinki
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SAA 15	A. Fuchs & S. Parpola 2001. *The Correspondence of Sargon II, Part III. Letters from Babylonia and the Eastern Provinces*, SAA 15, Helsinki
SAA 16	M. Luukko & G. Van Buylaere 2002. *The Political Correspondence of Esarhaddon*, SAA 16, Helsinki
SAAS	State Archives of Assyria Studies

Sg 8 Sargon's Letter to the God Ashur. For the text see W. Mayer 1983. Sargons Feldzug gegen Urartu – 714 v. Chr., Text und Übersetzung, *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft* 115: 65-132

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UPD I.M. D'jakonov, 1963. *Urartskie pis'ma i dokumenty* [*Urartian letters and documents*], Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, Moskva - Leningrad

VDI *Vestnik Drevnej Istorii [Messenger of Ancient History]*

ZA *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie*

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